

just simply cannot attach any probability or likelihood to it at this time until I have further discussion with other relevant people.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, could the majority leader indicate to us when we will be able to begin the process of analysis and numbers crunching on the Medicare provisions that will be a central part of reconciliation? Perhaps the gentleman could update us on when reconciliation is expected to come to the floor, and when we will be able to begin the process of understanding the full impact of those cuts in the Medicare Program that are obviously going to be very contentious and need a great deal of attention before we should be in a position to vote on them.

Mr. ARMEY. If the gentleman will continue to yield, again I thank the gentleman for asking. It is a little difficult to tell right now. We hope to complete our work. We have had a lot of people working very diligently on Medicare, and of course all the other work that is being done on reconciliation. We should begin to start seeing some of the fruits of the labor maybe as early as the end of next week, but I would say it would probably be somewhere closer to the end of September before we could really have defining work out here for us to examine.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, could the gentleman tell us when we anticipate reconciliation being brought to the floor? Has that been agreed to finally?

Mr. ARMEY. If the gentleman will again yield, I think once we get into the period of time where we have some very important recesses necessary for the Jewish holidays, that as we try to work our way around that, we might anticipate it would be perhaps the week before or the week following those Jewish holidays recess.

Mr. FAZIO of California. There is no intent to change our current schedule that has been announced and disseminated to Members on either Jewish holidays or the Columbus Day break?

Mr. ARMEY. I really appreciate the gentleman asking. Everybody should have a printed schedule in the form of calendars, and those dates for when the week begins and where it ends, and what days are off because of the holidays, those are firm. There would be no changes in there except possibly, should things go well on floor action, we might every now and then be able to have a pleasant surprise and get out a little earlier or maybe have an extra day to spend in our districts, but there would be no days in addition to those that are already in the schedule for the Members.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's reassurance. I am sure the Members appreciate that. We would look forward to only pleasant surprises, and no unhappy eventualities that might set us back.

Mr. ARMEY. If the gentleman will yield further, I am sure the gentleman realizes, or maybe does not realize he misspoke earlier, but Mr. Speaker, just for the record, I want to encourage the gentleman to appreciate the fact that we do not intend to see any package in which there will be Medicare cuts.

Mr. FAZIO of California. I was wondering if the gentleman might not have caught that. Reductions in the rate of increase, is that the jargon?

Mr. ARMEY. I would like to think of it as a generous increase.

Mr. FAZIO of California. For those who note the aging of America and the increasing population of the aged and the often double digit increases in the cost of health care, perhaps this is a much more important debate than simply a semantic one. We can hold that for the eventual introduction of the Medicare increase reductions.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

ADJOURNMENT TO TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1995

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, September 12, for morning hour debate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members are recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. HORN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. HORN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. SCHROEDER addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. MCINTOSH addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. OWENS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday the House considered the fiscal year 1996 legislative appropriations bill and I do agree that the House has to take a serious look at its own fiscal affairs. However, I would like to comment on a matter that relates to the daily operation of the House and does not make financial sense.

Last week, the House folding room and all of its related operations were closed. This decision was made under the guise of streamlining and reform. However, it is nothing more than a mean-spirited, poorly conceived, and fiscally irresponsible action. It is truly reform for the sake of reform.

I applaud the House Oversight Committee in its efforts to change the way that the House does business. I was elected to Congress to help to restore the public's faith in this institution. However, by trying to save money in closing the folding room, the committee has created a bookkeeping nightmare and as Members search for new vendors to serve the printing and mailing needs of their constituents, the total franking and overall costs to the taxpayer will probably increase.

Our constituents need and deserve to be well informed about the issues that affect them. Bulk mailings and newsletters are an essential part of our jobs and voters expect to have a clear line of communications to their representatives in Washington. Certainly, a responsible use of these mailing privileges is expected; nevertheless, by closing the folding room another barrier has been created between Washington and the rest of the country.

Why were other remedies related to the House operation of a folding room not considered further? An outside company could have been brought in to run the day-to-day operations of the folding room. As it now stands, congressional staffs now have to scramble to find new vendors and much of their productivity is wasted as they endeavor to fold, stuff, and seal hundreds of pieces of normal correspondence that they churn out on a daily basis. And the job is not done well. I know of a recent bulk mailing that was improperly handled by an outside vendor and because of this precious time and money was lost.